
Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 13, 2018

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City Officials and Families Speak Out For Traffic Safety in Advance of Back to School

As millions of students in Los Angeles County prepare to return to school, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is encouraging drivers to slow down and look out for people and children walking and biking. City officials, parents and children gathered at a special press conference at La Ballona Elementary School in Culver City on Monday, August 13 to raise awareness about the need for drivers to slow down and be alert as students return to school over the next several weeks.

Monday's press event highlighted these concerns and included remarks from the Mayor of Culver City Thomas Small, SCAG Regional Council Member Meghan Sahli-Wells, Culver City Police Chief Scott Bixby and Culver City Unified School District Superintendent Leslie Lockhart. Students participated in a bicycle helmet fitting and safe pedestrian crossing demonstration across Washington Boulevard.

"As students return to school over the next several weeks, we'd like to remind drivers to be alert and look out for children who are walking or biking to school. Back to school season is accompanied by a rise in traffic congestion, and with that, an increased risk of collisions between cars and people walking or biking," said Chief Bixby.

"Here in Culver City, mobility and traffic safety—especially in terms of getting our kids to school—really is job number one. Being able to get around the city efficiently and safely is the most important thing for the future—for the future of our economy and the future of our quality of life," added Mayor Small.

With advertising space throughout the six-county region (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura) on billboards and bus shelters, SCAG's *Go Human* advertising campaign hopes to counter an annual increase in collisions involving people walking throughout the region.

"Advertisements in the *Go Human* campaign personalize traffic safety messages by featuring different streets signs with real people on them. These 'Signs of Life' highlight important safety messages reminding drivers to watch out for people and children walking and biking," said Vice Mayor Meghan Sahli-Wells, a SCAG Regional Council Member.

The number of roadway fatalities involving people walking is on the rise in the SCAG region. Pedestrian fatalities have increased each year since 2012 and were 50 percent higher in 2016 than they were in 2011. According to the California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System, 1,580 people died and

more than 149,000 people were injured in collisions in the region in 2016. The *Go Human* campaign aims to combat and reverse these alarming statistics.

Working with several County Transportation Commissions and Public Health Departments, SCAG secured ad space in areas with high rates of collisions. The campaign also featured radio spots and digital ads primarily targeting drivers in the region.

As a reminder, schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District start on Tuesday, August 14. Culver City Unified School District schools start on Monday, August 27.

Culver City and the Safe Routes to School program will collaborate again for a community event on Sept. 15 that invites locals to test out temporary street improvements. For more information, visit <http://gohumansocal.org/Pages/Events/Go-Human-Events.aspx>

Funding for *Go Human* is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Additional information on SCAG's *Go Human* campaign is available at GoHumanSoCal.org.

Photos and video clips are available upon request.

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About SCAG

SCAG is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG's regional efforts, please visit www.scag.ca.gov.

About Go Human

Due to the increase in traffic collisions involving people walking and bicycling, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), launched Go Human, an active transportation safety and encouragement campaign. Go Human aims to increase the number of people walking and biking and decrease the number of collisions that involve people walking and biking. The campaign is a collaboration between SCAG and the health departments and transportation commissions from six counties in the region; Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura. For more information, visit www.gohumansocal.org.